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Submission by the Canadian Labour
Congress to the Hon. Robert Andras,
Minister of Manpower and Immigration on a
New Immigration Policy for Canada

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Canadian Labour Congress
to
The Honourable Robert Andras
Minister of Manpower & Immigration
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Ottawa, Canada.

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A New Immigration Policy for Canada

Mr. Minister:

1. The Canadian Labour Congress welcomes this opportunity to participate in the immigration policy review which you have initiated on behalf of the Federal Government. Your assessment that Canada needs a new immigration policy is timely, as is your recognition that the problems surrounding the review process are both complex and difficult. As such, the Congress accepts the invitation to make this submission as a sincere undertaking on your part to involve the Canadian people in the policy review process.
2. Over the years, the Canadian Labour Congress has demonstrated a continuing interest in all aspects of Canada's immigration policy. Many of our members came to Canada as immigrants, a reflection of the fact that a large percentage of Canadian citizens are themselves the children or grandchildren of previous generations of immigrants. The Congress recognizes and cherishes the contributions which have been made to the labour movement, as well as to the cultural life and prosperity of Canada, by both native-born citizens and immigrants. We are concerned about immigration policy not only because of the composition of our membership, but also because we believe that immigration policy is inextricably bound to other government policies which have a bearing on employment opportunities, housing and economic growth. In this connection, the Minister will find much that is familiar in the position of the Canadian Labour Congress expressed in this paper, for as another observer commented --

3. "The Canadian labour movement provides the best example of pressure in immigration consistently applied ... towards consistent ends and of a general concern for the whole field of immigration policy. The ends, as presented by the leadership of the labour movement, have

been that immigration should be an important element in national economic planning and that admissions should be intelligently geared to the business cycle. It has always been maintained that immigrant labour must not be allowed to undercut Canadian labour. It has also been maintained from the beginning that proper services should be provided for immigrants as part of the armoury of social services which should be provided for all Canadians, and that consultative machinery in immigration should be established."(1)

The position of the labour movement in Canada has not changed, because the nature and extent of the problems involved in immigration remain the same.

Economics and Immigration

4. In your statement of September 17th, Mr. Minister, you posed the question -- "Can we afford not to grow, or to grow at a slower pace than, for instance, our big neighbour to the South?" You go on to say in the following sentence Mr. Minister, that Canada's future immigration policy should be developed with the view to "safeguard our economic well-being, and assure our social and cultural development within a sovereign community". The Congress supports fully the latter part of your statement, but disagrees in a fundamental manner with the suggestion that Canada's "economic well-being" is somehow attached to the population

(1) Hawkins, Freda: Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern, The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and London, 1972, p. 350.

growth rate of the United States. Canada will be sovereign if its leaders have the political will to pursue independence. To accept the proposition however that Canada's immigration policy should be geared to the United States population growth, completely ignores the economic realities at work within Canada. And surely in any discussion of immigration policy, it is imperative to take into account a number of important economic factors, which affect both the interests of Canadians and those desirous of emigrating to Canada. To ignore these factors is to run the grave risk of aggravating current and possibly longer-term problems, and at the same time cause disenchantment in the hearts of those who come from foreign lands to find conditions here considerably different from what they anticipated.

5. The basic question which must always be asked is: what is the absorptive capacity of the Canadian economy at any point in time? This leads immediately to the next question of how is that absorptive capacity to be determined?

6. It would be naive, to say the least, to look at a map of this big, sprawling country and conclude, as some have long done, that Canada can afford to let in unlimited numbers. It would be equally naive to say, as again some have, that this is one of the wealthiest nations in the world, with vast resources greater than most countries, and therefore this is conducive to unrestricted immigration.

7. These are unrealistic criteria for defining the absorptive capacity of our economy. An economy is made up of people, with their talents, skills and energy, combined with whatever resources are available in reasonably habitable regions. Geographical size means very little if it relates to a country such as ours, much of which lies in northern latitudes which can at present support the needs and well-being of only a sparse population.

8. An unplanned Canadian immigration policy, oblivious to these hard facts, would soon result in that index of a nation's general prosperity, per capita national income, dropping sharply, absolutely and relatively to other industrialized countries.

9. At the same time, it is important to recognize that a policy which restricts the number of immigrants to a level below absorptive capacity would not only retard the potential expansion of our economy, thus adversely affecting the interests of all Canadians, but would also be unjust to foreigners who could make a significant economic and cultural contribution to this country. The challenge to policy makers is, therefore, to assess our absorptive capacity in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

10. Two of the chief determinants of absorptive capacity are unemployment rates and the interrelated rate of growth of the labour force. Canada has had a high unemployment rate for the past four years, exceeding, and in many cases far exceeding, that of most industrial countries. We see no evidence that this rate will be reduced in the near future, and, indeed, if our and other forecasts should prove to be correct the national unemployment rate for 1974 will be considerably higher than in 1973, and possibly higher than at any time since 1961.

11. Turning to the growth rate of the labour force, we have experienced much more rapid expansion than any other western industrial country. Our labour force growth rates have been several times as high as those in almost all industrial countries. It is also apparent that for some years to come the growth of the labour force will continue at a very high rate.

12. High unemployment and rapid labour force growth should, therefore, be important considerations in the formulation of immigration policy. Another important consideration is the kinds

of skills and semi-skills which are, and will be, required to meet the needs of this country. In a highly industrialized economy such as ours, it is essential, although difficult, to make such assessments on a current basis, let alone making prognostications as to what the Canadian economy will require in the years ahead.

13. It is for this reason that we need a flexible immigration policy which is adaptable to changing economic circumstances, and will result in enhancing the economic interests of Canadians already here and those who emigrate to our shores.

14. Your statement of September 17th Mr. Minister also referred to the "increasing reluctance of Canadians to have large families" and that "immigration seems likely to determine, more than heretobefore, Canada's population size". In our opinion this statement is closely connected with the one above comparing Canada's optimum population vis-a-vis the United States and our comments as stated above are applicable here as well. To elaborate further, however, the Congress has always avoided this numbers game. We have no interest in seeking greater glory, if that is what it would be, by improving our rank in national population statistics. On the other hand we are not opposed to immigration and have at no time opposed immigration as such. We have recognized the contribution which immigrants have made to the economic prosperity of Canada as well as to the cultural life of the country. We have consistently taken the position that immigration was necessary for Canada's continued economic development. At the same time, we have expressed our apprehension with respect to a policy which allowed, or even encouraged, immigration at times of high unemployment and which generally ignored economic conditions in the country. In a previous statement to the federal government in 1967, we stated that "Any long-term commitment to immigration must carry with it an understanding to maintain a high level of economic activity associated

with expanding job opportunities." In other words, as we said before, "Immigration cannot be separated from economic planning in general. Governmental measures which will stimulate and maintain a buoyant and full employment economy are also likely to make possible a steady flow of immigration since there will be room for their absorption into the economy." To make our position perfectly clear, we emphasized that the federal government's (as well as the provincial governments') measures for economic planning and stimulation of job opportunities must have the first priority so as to provide for the jobs and income security of the total population.

15. Immigration policies aimed at stimulating a flow of skilled and unskilled workers, professional and other workers to Canada must be part of the general economic planning, but the introduction of immigrants as workers must be secondary to finding jobs and maintaining jobs for Canadian citizens. But once persons are admitted to Canada as adult landed immigrants, we believe they should be treated on a basis of equality for job opportunities and promotion, and equal pay for equal work.

Rural vs. City

16. Further in your statement of September 17, you pointed out that a few Canadian cities are getting bigger at the expense of rural areas and even whole regions, and you asked the question, if we want new immigrants, do we want them to continue to concentrate overwhelmingly in our big cities, or do we want more of them to settle in those areas which need them most.

17. We oppose what we believe is the premise on which these questions are based. The questions, it seemed to us, implied that immigrants can be used to correct fundamental deficiencies in demographic patterns or distortions in regional economic growth.

The questions suggest, to us at least, that there are some aspects of rural life which an increasing percentage of rural-based Canadian citizens do not like, or choose to avoid or escape from, and which are not attractive to city-based Canadians; but somehow, somewhere we will find immigrants who will take to Canadian rural (or small town) life and correct the seeming imbalances. In our view this is the wrong approach to the problem of rural or regional depopulation.

18. It is quite true that there have been large numbers of immigrants who have come from rural areas of other countries in the past and who have settled on farms, become homesteaders, and otherwise carved out a new home for themselves in the wilderness areas and less populated regions of Canada. In recent times rural depopulation has been a continuing trend because of the lack of job opportunities in rural communities. The children and the grandchildren of previous generations of immigrants have as a consequence gradually drifted away from their original homes in order to find better economic opportunities, or jobs of any kind, in the larger centres. To seek new farmer immigrants, or new colonies of farm-oriented families to replace those who have left the rural areas is only to look for a temporary and inadequate solution to the decline of the family farm.

19. The same comment could be made with respect to forestry, mining and other resource-based industry in isolated or sparsely populated parts of the country. A program of directed settlement in these areas will not succeed unless these areas are also attractive to Canadian citizens. There are some individuals, not many it is true, who prefer the loneliness, the solitude, the ruggedness, the beauty, the grandeur of Canada's wilderness areas. But prospects for a massive injection of new population into these areas will not be successful if our approach is to count on immigrants to undertake a life which Canadians, many of whom know

the problems of living in these areas from personal and family experience, have abandoned or refused to take up.

20. The related problems of rural depopulation and concentration of population in the major centres can only marginally be solved by immigration. It is extremely doubtful whether immigration policy could encourage settlement on the land or in the more sparsely populated regions by means of government subsidies and other incentives or by a forced settlement policy. A subsidy and incentive program aimed at inducing individuals and families to settle outside the major centres is doomed to failure. It is a simple truth, that if there are jobs available in the rural regions of Canada that pay a decent wage, then both immigrants and Canadian citizens alike will move to those jobs. And if industry is directed to establish itself in the rural regions as part of overall economic and regional planning, then, and only then, will depopulated rural areas attract people away from the cities.

21. Newcomers tend to prefer the major centres for the same reasons citizens do -- they can find a greater variety of employment opportunities, they can more likely find a house, apartment or room which is near their work, schools, shops, doctor's office and other community services, they have better prospects of living near relatives and friends, and they can find more of their former compatriots with whom to speak their language and enjoy common cultural activities.

22. If settlement in new cities or smaller centres and rural areas is the objective then we should plan in terms of people, not immigrants.

What Kind of Immigrant?

23. Your statement of September 17 then goes on to ask what kind of immigrants does our labour market, present and future, require, and what kind of immigrants are we seeking in terms of

our social and cultural future. Once again, the emphasis, it occurs to us, is misplaced. It would be preferable to ask, "what kind of society do we want to build?"

24. Our answer, in part, would be a society in which there will be expanding opportunities, one in which there will be a job with decent pay and conditions for everybody who wants a job and makes himself or herself available for work, and one where there will be an equitable distribution of income. If we pursue these and similar goals there will be expanding opportunities for those Canadians who are presently unemployed, those who would seek work if jobs were available, and those who are leaving school and wanting to enter the labour force. There would also be opportunities for those citizens of other countries who look to Canada as a place to transfer home and family and build a new life.

25. There is a distinct danger in basing policy on the criterion, "what kind of immigrant does our labour market require." Such a policy could lead to a condition where human dignity and rights are completely subjugated to the demands of the marketplace. It might well be, for instance that our labour market requires entire families, men, women and children, to work in the fields with no protection of minimum wages or labour standards; or to recruit abroad desperate, hungry people who will do dirty, hard, body- and mind-killing jobs that Canadian citizens increasingly are refusing to do, or to live in isolated communities with no amenities off the job and transportation to and from outside communities at the individual's risk. With these possibilities and dangers in mind the Canadian Labour Congress rejects outrightly the philosophy of the market place as the sole determinant of the kind of immigrant Canada wants, and needs. However, in terms of skills needed by the Canadian economy, the market place will be the major factor.

26. As such, the annual report of the Department states that, the first objective of the Immigration Division is the stimulation of economic, cultural and social development by recruitment of immigrants with the skills required by the Canadian economy. (This program includes the admission of relatives of Canadian residents or refugees, as well as non-immigrants who are admitted on a temporary basis.) On previous occasions we have pointed out that Canadian employers have enjoyed a subsidy at the expense of employers in Europe and elsewhere. While we are in favour of the free movement of peoples between countries on a voluntary basis, we have been critical of the active recruitment by Canada of skilled manpower. The availability of workers trained at somebody else's expense has contributed to a considerable reluctance on the part of Canadian employers to engage in on-the-job training programs, or to hire Canadians fresh out of school with no work experience. Frequently an entire plant, or a division of a plant, has been staffed by immigrant workers. We repeat what we have stated before, that we are not opposed to immigration as such, but we find it incongruous that the federal government encourages immigration while thousands of Canadian workers with the potential to acquire skills are passed over. There must surely be an obligation on the part of Canadian employers to train our own people and not use the world as a source of supply.

27. In addition to recruiting skilled workers in the industrialized countries, Canada has also gone to the developing countries which can ill afford to lose their trained people. We do not favour a policy of admitting only unskilled workers, and we would not like to see other countries imposing arbitrary restrictions on the free movement of their people who want to emigrate. But since it is our declared policy to assist in the development of the countries of the Third World, we believe that

Canada should explore problems of development and emigration in concert with other countries, and particularly the countries from which immigrants are coming, and are likely to come in increasing numbers, to Canada.

28. A number of the Congress affiliates in the building trades have been experiencing difficulties with the Employment Visa Regulations which became effective January 1, 1973.

29. It appears that under the Employment Visa Schedule 1, Part 4, subsection 17, an immigration officer may issue an employment visa without reference to a Canada Manpower Centre to "persons entering to repair or service specialized equipment purchased outside Canada."

30. If there are persons in Canada who are available and who are capable of performing the job then it is only right and just that they should receive priority. The regulations and the directions to immigration officers ought to be changed whereby the Manpower Centres are consulted as to the availability of skilled Canadians to perform the task. Then, and only then, should visas be issued to foreign workers.

Overseas Operations

31. In addition to the matters outlined in your statement of September 17, we would urge that your policy review examine a number of other areas of concern, such as the question of the overseas operations of the Immigration Division.

32. This is a matter which has been the subject of policy resolutions from our Labour Councils and Federations of Labour as well as from conventions of our affiliates and the Congress itself. From their daily contact with workers on the job, our members are recipients of countless complaints and recitations of

misrepresentation by immigration officials overseas as to the nature of job opportunities, income levels, lifestyle, cost-of-living, availability of housing, the quality of life, and the like, in Canada. We appreciate that this criticism can be highly subjective and may be coloured or exaggerated as a result of extraneous circumstances and occurrences, but there is no doubt in our mind that there is a need for an objective study of (a) the perceptions of Canada and Canadian life by immigrants in a variety of countries, (b) the information procedures which confirm or modify these perceptions, and (c) the brochures and information booklets which are distributed to prospective immigrants.

33. It is our considered opinion that some aspects of Canadian life find no place in the information package. For example, it is quite obvious that newcomers to Canada from countries which do not have a democratic government, are not being briefed, or they are being briefed inadequately, on their rights and obligations when they become Canadian citizens. Therefore, immigrants are woefully ill-informed or misinformed on their rights to transfer from one job to another, the availability of medicare and hospital care, welfare services, unemployment insurance, language instruction and all manner of civic and community services. As employees they are easily intimidated by employers who lay off, or threaten to lay off, at the slightest indication of union activity. The immigration information package should explain workers' rights under the various trade union legislation and labour standards codes. Furthermore, the Congress should be consulted on the information bulletins which describe to the prospective immigrant the role of trade unions and the rights of working people to join trade unions and to engage in collective bargaining with their employer.

34. We are not asking the federal government to undertake a union organizing campaign among new Canadians, but as a basic

minimum the information about Canada given to immigrants should include a recitation and explanation of the preamble to the Canada Labour Code. We are referring particularly to that part of the preamble which declares that "Canadian workers, trade unions and employers recognize and support freedom of association, and free collective bargaining as the bases of effective industrial relations for the determination of good working conditions and sound labour-management relations." From our information, immigrants are not being told that free collective bargaining is accepted in public policy as a basis for determining working conditions. On the contrary, some employers are doing everything in their power to prevent immigrant workers from exercising their right to organize trade unions. In addition, the responsibility of the Immigration Division does not end once the immigrant has been cleared for landed immigrant status, but continues while the immigrant is adjusting to Canadian life. As well as directing immigrants to job vacancies, the Department of Manpower and Immigration should hand each immigrant worker a simple statement of "your rights as a worker in Canada." based on federal and provincial legislation and practice, and printed in the immigrant's own language as well as in English and French.

35. The annual report of the Department records that since 1951 approximately \$56 million has been loaned to more than 300,000 immigrants under the assisted passage loan scheme. This is a commendable program for helping immigrants meet their transportation and removal expenses, but more should be done to enable immigrants to integrate with Canadian life quickly and smoothly. Much more could be done to assist immigrants in finding suitable housing at rents they can afford to pay, much more needs to be done to make sure that immigrants understand what public services are available to them without charge, and much more must be done to help immigrants and their children learn English and French and otherwise become part of their new communities.

36. Many immigrants are vulnerable from the beginning, but instead of turning to public officials for assistance they resort too frequently to the services of ethnic middlemen and brokers who speak the immigrant's language. Many immigrants are thus exploited in unconscionable ways. The problem is not necessarily the lack of public services, but the lack of access to these services because of ignorance or the inability to communicate on the part of the immigrant in the English or French languages. In other cases, immigrants are afraid to ask about their rights or have been intimidated into believing they have no rights. We know, for example, that immigrants who have come from totalitarian regimes have little or no knowledge of the free trade union movement. To overcome this problem there should be public boards established at the community level to which the immigrant could turn for advice. There should be no compulsion placed upon the immigrant to consult with such a board because making it compulsory would defeat the whole purpose. The idea behind the formation of this "unofficial board" is to encourage immigrants to seek assistance from an agency with no regulatory function. This public board should be able to draw upon linguists and should be composed of a cross-section of the community including trade union people. If this board is to perform a useful function then its availability and its non-regulatory function must be made known to the immigrant. In this way perhaps the exploitation of immigrants will be eliminated or at the least, greatly reduced.

The English and French Balance

37. The matter of the balance between English- and French-speaking Canadians and the present multi-cultural fabric of Canada deserve close scrutiny, and we look forward to your proposals in the Green Paper. We support unequivocally the federal policy on

bilingualism and biculturalism and, therefore, we believe it is important that immigration policy should not be used to upset the balance which has evolved over more than 100 years. Immigrants to Canada should be informed that they will be expected to speak the language of the community into which they settle.

38. The multi-cultural fabric of Canada is also an important matter for the immigration review. This is an area which requires much more encouragement from the federal government, and much more understanding on the part of the Canadian people. We have supported the initiatives of the federal government aimed at helping new immigrants to feel welcome in Canada and to retain their distinctive cultural activities while at the same time adapting to the broader considerations of Canadian life. As far as the Canadian public is concerned, and we include the labour movement as an important element of this public, we must broaden our sights and open our doors to other peoples who are not yet well represented in our population. The encouragement which Canada has given to the preservation of cultural values cherished by various immigrant groups is a significant factor in attracting newcomers from still other countries. But as we mentioned earlier, the encouragement of immigration, from whatever quarter, must be related to the economic opportunities which are available and which can be developed.

Migrant Workers

39. The question of inviting "guest workers" as you term them to fill specific short-term labour requirements is complex. We are aware that Canadians in a wide variety of trades, occupations and professions -- construction and the performing arts to mention just two categories -- find it desirable to take jobs or contracts outside of Canada from time to time or on a regular basis. We would not be party to any recommendation or policy which would

interfere with the legitimate mobility of workers between countries. What alarms us about the encouragement of "guest workers" is that unlike construction workers or members of the performing arts in our example, foreign workers coming to Canada on a short-term basis have no representation by a union for purposes of collective bargaining, and in some occupations will not even have the protection of labour standards codes.

40. Labour immigration has become an important aspect of the agricultural industry of the United States, and of the manufacturing industries in Western Europe. In every country where it exists, the same patterns emerge. The immigrants who come from the underdeveloped areas are restricted almost without exception to low-paying jobs. They are under-represented in the services sector except for domestic service and catering. They are hired mainly for monotonous, assembly-line and noisy, dirty, or smelly jobs -- the jobs nobody else wants.

41. This tendency towards segregation is also found outside work: immigrants have low-quality, over-crowded housing in run down areas or live in special hostels or camps near the factories. Immigrant children attend no schools at all or inferior schools. Immigrants typically are deprived of civil and political rights: they are deported without due process in the case of even minor infractions and they have difficulty in establishing a trade union. We are not suggesting that all of these conditions necessarily apply in Canada, but an influx of "guest workers" would encourage such conditions and we have already experienced them in the tobacco and fruit picking industries in Ontario.

42. The "industrial reserve army" as immigrant populations are known in Europe affects the citizen labour force in one or both of two ways: one, it establishes a class system of exploited immigrant worker and privileged native worker; and two, it inhibits the efforts of native workers to improve their wages and

working conditions by providing "unfair competition" and effective strikebreaking forces. In view of the seasonal nature of production in some sectors of Canadian industry, we do not dismiss out of hand the desirability of inviting "guest workers" to Canada. But any program in this direction should take into account the interests of Canadian unemployed workers, the opportunities for training, transporting and providing suitable accommodation for Canadian workers for seasonal work, and the revision of inadequate labour standards codes to protect both Canadian and immigrant seasonal workers.

43. On the questions of the equality of treatment to migrant workers and access to the social services of the host country, the Congress draws to your attention ILO Convention No. 97 concerning Migration for Employment (Revised 1949), and the resolution concerning ILO action for promoting the equality of migrant workers in all social and labour matters, adopted by the Conference at its 56th (1971) session. The recommendations contained in these Conventions must form a part of Canada's immigration policy in this area.

44. It will not be acceptable to us for the Green Paper, or the Department of Manpower and Immigration, to take the position that some of these matters do not fall under the department's jurisdiction and therefore cannot be subject to examination and recommendation. Since immigration policy cannot be determined in isolation from other government policies, any aspect of Canadian life which is impinged upon by immigration must be considered.

45. In view of the unemployment which has plagued Canada in recent years however, there would be no need for migrant workers if decent wages were paid for those jobs which migrant workers are traditionally called upon to perform.

Humanitarian Considerations

46. There is one aspect of immigration policy which needs no review, but which should be emphasized as having a continuing place in Canadian policy. This is the attitude which Canada has traditionally held towards refugees, whether they be refugees from famine, flood, or other natural disaster, or whether they be refugees from political oppression and war. In the case of natural disasters, the appropriate remedy may be prompt short-term financial or economic aid on the part of Canada and only in the event of recurring adverse conditions will people take the more drastic step of uprooting families and emigrating. Persons escaping from prolonged economic deprivation or sudden disaster may need more than a plane ticket and a hostel for two weeks on arrival. They are making a new start in life, and since few of them will have friends or relatives in Canada, the Canadian public should be prepared to share its good fortune with them. We should not screen out those who have no resources and admit only refugees who will not be a direct charge on the public purse.

47. In the case of political refugees, the need to start a new life will be just as desperate. In a world torn by sudden and violent conflict within countries and between countries, refugees have little if any time to prepare for their safe exit. Since the problem of refugees is likely to be a continuing one, Canada should establish a formal procedure, subject to ad hoc modifications, for dealing with emergency situations without delay. We are not recommending that Canada adopt the posture of poking its nose into the internal affairs of other sovereign states, but on the basis of humanitarian grounds alone. Canada must be prepared to accept political refugees. That must surely be the primary consideration when an emergency presents itself.

48. It must be accepted that a good many refugees will be as good prospects for citizenship as those who come under normal

circumstances. Refugees who were admitted from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and from Uganda more recently, have fulfilled all possible expectations of a generous admissions policy. On the other hand, there are bound to be others whose admission could be considered only as an act of grace or international responsibility. On previous occasions, the Congress has taken the position that Canada must be generous rather than niggardly, willing rather than reluctant, in admitting its fair share of such refugees. As a corollary of this policy Canada should adopt whatever special measures are necessary to assist these refugees in adapting to a new life in this country

49. Finally, on the question of political refugees, Canada should closely examine its past record with respect to the actual or alleged political persuasion or affiliation of refugees. Canada must not only do justice in its relations with political immigrants but must also appear to do justice. The current political situation in Chile is a case in point. Canada waited an inordinate length of time before deciding to admit, give sanctuary to, or interview Chilean political refugees. Suspicion here is that the reason for the apparent aloofness on the part of Canadian officials in Santiago was that those who would want to take refuge in Canada inevitably would be "leftists" who had already been categorized as "undesirable" by unsympathetic External Affairs officials. Canadian policy with respect to political refugees should be clearly stated, not only for the interests of potential immigrants but also for the guidance of immigration officials and information of the Canadian public. The only political questions which prospective immigrants should have to answer are those related to their intended allegiance to the Queen and support for the democratic mode of government. We do not rule out the need for adequate screening so as to admit only those refugees who are dedicated to the kinds of political

principles and institutions by which we live. In public statements at the time of the coup, and subsequently when far too much time had passed without any response from the federal government, the Congress urged the federal government to open wide the door of the Canadian embassy in Santiago to all eligible refugees who want to come here.

50. Canada reacted quickly and generously to the Hungarian, Czechoslovakian and Ugandan tragedies. It should have been as prompt in the Chilean disaster.

The Present Selection Methods

51. We would like to elaborate on our statement, made above that Canadian policy should welcome prospective immigrants without discrimination as to national origin, religion, race or colour. The Congress, in a previous submission in 1967 to the federal government declared that "the Immigration Act has for too many years stigmatized Canada as a country which selects immigrants on the basis of such irrational criteria as ethnic origin or colour." We went on to say that the Governor-in-Council could make regulations which clearly opened the way to discrimination and abuse, and that while Canada had not officially adhered to a "white" immigration policy, the administration of policy has been such that Canada was not far removed from a "white" policy. Present immigration policy based on the points system stressing educational and professional skills, still appears to give preference to certain nationalities and races -- citizens of the United Kingdom, Northern Europe and white citizens of the United States seem to have enjoyed the highest priority and others have been in a descending order, with citizens of African or Asian origin well down on the list. This is to be expected of

course under a points system stressing industrial skills. On the other hand some 20,000 persons entered the country during this period who would not have been admitted under the points system but who have adapted well. This statistic strikes at the very foundations of the present points system itself as a criteria for admittance.

52. In recent years there has been an increase in immigration of non-whites from Hong Kong and India as well as from the British West Indies, and to the extent that this increase represents a departure from the apparent pro-white policy of previous years, we welcome the change. On the other hand, the increase in immigration from Hong Kong, India and the British West Indies based on the points system represents only an interest in skilled and professional workers and not a change of heart. In any event, we believe that the new immigration policy which emerges from this review should state categorically that Canada welcomes the interest of prospective immigrants from all countries and of all racial origins who are prepared to make a contribution to Canadian life.

53. In conclusion, we have set out here some of the major concerns of the labour movement which we believe should help to guide those who are conducting the immigration policy review. We look forward to studying the Green Paper which is being prepared for publication early in 1974, and will take the opportunity at that time to comment in greater detail on a new immigration policy for Canada.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the

Canadian Labour Congress,

Donald MacDonald, President,

William Dodge, Secretary-Treasurer,

Joseph Morris, Executive Vice-President,

Jean Beaudry, Executive Vice-President.



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